



NEBRASKA COLLEGE OF TECHNICAL AGRICULTURE

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Sips and sales in summer class

By NCTA News

Research the business. Design and implement a viable business plan. Revise and adjust as needed.

Know how to communicate with your boss, co-workers, employees, and the public. Learn from mistakes. Don't give up to daunting challenges or naysayers.

Entrepreneur Jaden Clark recently offered these tips, along with their coffee drinks, to eight college students in a sales communications class.

Clark owns several businesses in Curtis, home to the Nebraska College of Technical Agriculture where he also coaches the Aggie rodeo team.

"Jaden shared what he's learned through some trial and error, in working in several business ventures the last few years," said Emma Hollenback, an NCTA sophomore from Ewing, Nebraska.

Last fall, Clark opened an early morning and daytime gathering spot called Cowboys, Corgis and Coffee. The venue adjoins a real estate business where he worked with his father, J.R.

To the north, also on main street, Clark purchased, updated, and reopened a shuttered carwash. He supports other entrepreneurs and local business start-ups.

Hollenback found Clark's advice encouraging and motivational. "He talked about thinking outside the box, and not to get discouraged by challenges."

While taking Speech 1103: Sales Communication for summer session, Hollenback is working fulltime on the NCTA farm/ranch crew. Her dual emphasis at NCTA is all about horses, however - Veterinary Technology (Equine Health) and Animal Science (Equine Industry Management).

First-hand accounts from entrepreneurs such as Coach Clark are valuable, said Ag Business Management Professor Mary Rittenhouse. The 3-credit hour class emphasizes retail and service salesmanship. For their final project, each student selects a product, prepares a business plan, and gives a sales pitch.

"Many of our NCTA students do go on to a sales-related career and this course has been helpful in understanding the industry," Rittenhouse says.

Next summer, Hollenback plans her Vet Tech internship at a large-animal veterinary clinic where she hopes to assist veterinarians with horses and cattle.

She will be prepared for the customer service and product sales side of job duties, she said.

Sales prep for horse treats or eats

Classmate Harlie Wylie of Winside has similar interests to Hollenback, however her emphasis is on livestock production and Equine Industry Management.

Since she works a full-time night shift at a Gothenburg nursing home during college, Wylie knows hard work. She will graduate after a three-year college program. Her two classes this summer are Feeding the Equine Patient and Sales Communication.

Wylie said she appreciated Clark's candor and guidance. Direct answers are a key to communication.

"He answered all of my questions about starting a business, and he gave good advice about communicating with individuals who may be naysayers," she shared.

In-depth research and knowledgeable conversation is key in any setting, Clark said, whether the communication is with a potential customer, family members, an advisor or detractor.

"Respond to questions based on research and provide a valid answer. Do your research and demonstrate your knowledge to the listener," Wylie said, paraphrasing the advice.

For her class project and presentation, due in early August, her product will be homemade horse treats with different flavors such as peppermint.

Hollenback will target equine customers with a specialty horse feed.



Jaden Clark, owner of Cowboys, Corgis and Coffee, shares entrepreneurship advice with Sales Communications students from the Nebraska College of Technical Agriculture. (Mary Rittenhouse photo)

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Online article: <https://go.unl.edu/h48e>